Die Welt und das Reale

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Le monde et le réel

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World and World-Experience in "Nitro a svět" ("The Inner and the World")

Marco Barcaro

We all know the famous expression that Patočka uses in his habilitation thesis of 1936: the Husserlian concept of the *transcendental*, i. e., this "preexistent" subjectivity, "*is* the world" (Patočka 2016, 20). In my opinion, here Patočka seems to intuit and to anticipate what he will only be able to explain more clearly forty years later through the concept of totality (or whole). In 1936 the basic phenomenal plan still remains the same as the one outlined by Husserl, but this plan gradually becomes the moving and flowing soil that we call "world." Stating that the world is the *transcendental* itself means that the world is not a creation of our ego, but the foundation of our understanding of the ego. In Patočka the world will gradually assume the place that Husserl assigned to the subjective *transcendental*. These insights will be formulated in greater depth in the 1970s. Here are two examples.

The first example is taken from a theoretically very challenging essay of 1972 entitled "Weltform der Erfahrung und Welterfahrung." Here Patočka writes that the world is the condition of the possibility of experience; it is "the constant and fundamental a priori of every experience" (Patočka 2000, 104). The possibilities of experience come from the world, not from the ego. And the world is not just our representation, because each subject "is not *in front of* the world, but is contained *in* it" (ibid. 106). The world cannot even be represented, because it is the *omnitudo realitatis* or the horizon already present in advance. In addition to being the totality of the possibilities of experience, the form of the world directly affects its appearing.

The second example comes from a 1974 essay entitled "Die Selbstbesinnung Europas." Here Patočka writes: "This whole, always familiar but never cognitively understood in its own essence, is what can be referred to as 'world'" (Patočka 1994, 252). Our daily experience not only presupposes our

encounters with singular beings, but also presupposes an "unconditioned" whole within which every experience takes place and toward which every experience is oriented. Our experience "is nothing more than a continuous development of this global horizon" (ibid.). Deepening the world-interpretation therefore means—here taking Kant as a point of departure—"becoming interested in the solution of a problem considered one of the greatest problems of *reason*: the so-called cosmological antinomy" (ibid.). However, talking about an experience of the world is a paradoxical use of language, since we cannot experience the totality of things "in the flesh" (*leibhaftig*). "Experiencing the world" is accordingly a paradoxical expression because the world is never given to us as a single thing we can experience. Yet we must always presuppose it because it "makes experience possible" (ibid. 253) and creates the possibility that experience will continue. As the totality of Being, the concept of the world is a problematic concept because it goes beyond any possible experience. We usually use concepts that describe the experience of objects, but the world is not an individual object. It is "the overall plot of our behavioral possibilities […]. The world is primarily the field of possibilities […] governing the relationship between people and things and giving them meaning" (ibid. 254). For this reason the world can only be grasped by starting from temporality.

Patočka's point of view is therefore no longer that of transcendental consciousness with its horizon of intentionality. The world, which becomes the universal framework of every experience, is "an absolute outer" (ibid. 255) compared to a consciousness that is self-contained, closed in itself. As the studies of Renaud Barbaras in France have brought to light, the world manifests itself to us by withdrawing. In fact, Patočka speaks of its "paradoxical absent presence" (ibid.). In the 1974 essay the philosopher repeatedly uses the expression "secret of the world" (*Weltgeheimnis*) to indicate this elusive component that penetrates every historical world, including our scientific-technological world. On the concluding page of his essay, this secret of the world is compared to "the awareness of the multidimensionality of simple yet inexhaustible life" (ibid. 273). Thus the very essence of the lifeworld can be identified precisely in this remaining obscure aspect.

In my contribution I shall refer to a manuscript of the early 1940s entitled "Nitro a svět" ("The Inner and the World"); this will allow us to reflect on the trajectory of Patočka's thought, culminating in the work of the 1960s and 1970s, and on certain earlier inceptions of his more mature position. My reflections will follow three steps: how is the world described in this manuscript?

What is reality from the perspective of "Nitro a svět"? What does world-experience mean for Patočka in the early 1940s?

1. How the World is Described in "Nitro a svět"

For Patočka's readers it is quite natural to compare the beginnings of his reflections with the work of his final period. However, we know little about what he was working on in the period between these two points, i. e., from the early 1940s to the end of the 1950s. According to Filip Karfík, Patočka was working on "Nitro a svět" from 1942 to 1944. This manuscript is part of the Strahov-Nachlass; it was to have been part of a larger project, which, however, remained unfinished. Here Patočka tries to develop a philosophy of human beings and of their "inner"—their living subjective inwardness— understood in a transcendental sense. On the one hand, it is possible to recognize motives deriving from German idealism, while on the other hand, a different phenomenological approach emerges. This allows us to glimpse an attempt at a first revision of transcendental phenomenology. In any case, it would have been possible to develop a philosophy of world-objectivity on this basis. There are essentially two terms through which the philosopher speaks of the world: "whole" (*celek*) and "light" (*světlo*).

"Nitro a svět" confirms that Patočka was already reflecting on the concept of totality in the early 1940s. In fact, aware that "there is an entire series of renowned world-concepts" (Patočka 2014b, 54), Patočka believes that only the most original concept of the world could make the connections among these concepts visible. But what does this original concept mean? The whole "is nothing concrete" (ibid. 55), but is "a kind of *beyond-fact*, a *beyond-object*" (ibid. 54). We do not have any intuition of it, and yet we cannot doubt that every experience always takes place within this overall whole. Indeed, it is only this concept that makes the universe possible as a complex of all existing things. Human life is accordingly in close connection with the world. However, this whole is not an object or a complex of objects, but "the whole of meaning" (ibid. 55)[1] that governs our life. It should not be understood in an

[1] "World" therefore refers not to a collection of things, but to our understanding of things.

objectified sense because our life, which is connected to it, "can never be *completely* objectified" (ibid.). For Patočka, then, the world is originally, and shall forever remain, non-objective; instead, it "determines the objectivities in their own sense" (ibid.). Thus the ego does not access the world from the outside, since "the ego does not go toward the world as it would go toward [outer] objective contents" (ibid.). On the other hand, the world "is not our own subjectivity either" (ibid.). Rather, the world is the project, the plan, of an opening of the path called subjectivity. For this reason the world manifests, more clearly than anything else, that "the human inner is not anything originally closed in itself, but is directed away from itself toward the outer" (ibid.).

Patočka also uses the metaphor of light (*světlo*) in order to describe the fundamental phenomenon of the world. The world is the light that is made possible through us and in which we see all things. The world "provides orientation, […] lets us understand what surrounds us and is formed in us" (ibid.). The world lights up, manifests, and makes things accessible, and in doing so, it simultaneously conceals itself within the things that it illuminates: the world is dissolved in the things we perceive. Moreover, the world is a light poured into three streams or dimensions.[2] These directions, which are originally inseparably unified, are the inner dimension of dispositions of moods (*nálada*); the external or social dimension (that is, the people together with whom we live in the world);[3] and the temporal dimension.[4] As Patočka points out, the first dimension (the disposition of mood) is not just a subjective condition (that is, it does not merely manifest just how *I* feel), but is always already related to others. For this reason things manifest themselves in this mood "in an even more original way" (ibid. 56). Reading the text, however, it seems that these three dimensions do not exhaust the structure of the world as a whole. Let us now consider what reality is in "Nitro a svět."

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[2] Patočka seems to keep these three dimensions of the structure of the world in mind, but he does not explicitly explain them in this text.

[3] In "World and Objectivity" (ibid. section III), Patočka seems to indicate a different threefold structure: the objective dimension (or situation), moods, and the personal or social dimension.

[4] The temporal dimension does not become explicit in "World and Objectivity." For this reason it was necessary to make it explicit in "The Inner, Time, and the World" (ibid. 68–69). Moreover, it is implicit in Patočka's metaphor of the journey (way, pilgrimage).

2. The Outer and Inner of Reality

Patočka states that reality is made of an outer and an inner. Generally the term "outer" refers to the "objectivity" of the world. At this level of mere objectivity, we are human bodies and nothing else. The outer is the sphere of nature. Our understanding of reality also refers to this outer because it requires an objectification. Objectivity is therefore the theme that emerges most clearly with reference to the outer. This theme concerns the clarification of the meaning of reality. While Patočka is working on this project, just seven years have elapsed since Husserl's Vienna and Prague lectures on the crisis of the European sciences; thus Patočka's reflection has its roots in that topic. The development of the sciences is extraordinary, but according to Husserl, the crisis of the sciences is linked to the loss of their meaning for human life. The origin of this loss is identified as the mathematization of nature. The use of mathematics in order to produce precise measurements of reality becomes the fundamental criterion, but the choice of a method is never neutral because it already determines the very nature of the target object in some way.[5] The "nature" that the scientist studies, aiming toward accuracy, is already partly built into the observer's method. Meanwhile, however, an experiential and pre-scientific dimension of the world—a dimension in which every science is founded—remains unobserved. As Patočka will write in an essay in 1969, thought is always objective by necessity because "where the object disappears, thought remains in the presence of an ungovernable mystery" (Patočka 2011a, 75); however, even science "is not possible without non-objectivity" (Patočka 2015, 361). The problem of objectivity is connected to the theme of life, which is essentially non-objective.[6] As Ana Santos writes, the "principle" of objectivity is a "foundation" that "must be connected, to whatever degree, 'with the essence of all that is living'" (Santos 2007, 20). Patočka often returns to the necessity of shaking the supposed certainty of "objective" data for the reason already mentioned: namely, because the theme of objectivity is connected to the theme of life. The natural attitude of the scientist leads to a naturalization of nature with the consequence that the universe of nature begins to move away from the vital center of the human being. We must therefore ask what the origin of this "objective" data is. And what does "data" mean? Does it have

[5] See Husserl 1970, 51: "we take for *true being* what is actually a *method*."

[6] In the 1950s Patočka will write an essay entitled "The 'Subjective Point of Departure' and the Objective Biology of Man" (see Patočka 1988, 155–179).

its origin in itself, is it something positive or not?[7] In an essay written in 1947 entitled "Eternity and Historicity," Patočka protests against the exclusivity of objective being: "'the world that I understand, which is present, is not everything'—in fact there is me understanding, perceiving, without being objectified in the face of what I protest against" (Patočka 2011b, 129). We feel that our contact with things lies at the foundation of life, and our own original performance (*výkon*) can never be objectified in a positive and adequate manner. Thus what is at stake is understanding, and being able to explain, how that which is essentially non-objective is able to enter the world of objects. According to Patočka, this happens only as the harmony (*souznění*) of the double non-distinction of subject and object. This sympathetic harmony is made up of sensation and perception.

In any case, however, although objectification is criticized, it is always still connected to human existence. In fact, we cannot separate its sense from our living in the world where we contact other people. Yet objectification is completely inadequate with respect to internal life. As an objectified subject, one becomes a stranger to oneself, eventually turning into a piece of the universe toward which we behave as if toward something alien. Here existence objectifies, reifies, materializes itself while projecting its inner outward. As Husserl pointed out in *The Crisis of European Sciences*, an objectification of the purely subjective will always be inadequate. The presupposed world in which life and experience immerse us remains the ultimate level and the true "subject." Living nature, however, as Patočka states, "is not a pure objectivity, but a subject-object" (Patočka 2014b, 64) with its own autonomy.

Patočka therefore thinks that nature and human beings share a *non-thing-like* inner. This assumption forestalls any conception asserting that the subjective and the objective aspect are presented separately from each other. Rather, as he writes, "whenever the interpretation of life starts from the objective […] the ontic abyss opening up between the inner and the outer, the living and the dead, the concrete and the abstract, the seeing and the seen, can never be overcome" (ibid. 56). On the one hand, therefore, the non-distinction of the duality of subject and object is found in the context of being-in-the-world (which is the real subject of the synthesis); on the other hand, it is also found in the material content of synthesis, i. e., in nature. Living nature

[7] Patočka reaches greater theoretical clarity on these questions in the 1970s while working on the meaning of the phenomenological epoché.

is thus not a pure object, but the subject-object that is "a fundamental component of our life" (ibid. 64).

Here there emerges an important difference between Patočka's thought and the idealist perspective. According to idealist thought, only synthesis makes the object possible, because synthesis makes the understanding of an objective unity possible. The object is therefore the result (*výsledek*) or the correlate of a synthetic performance bestowing meaning. Proceeding in this way, however, the question of the subject of the synthesis and its content receives no answer. Indeed, that which is the objective assumes importance only thanks to a non-objective operation, which in turn gives the objective its meaning. According to Patočka, the synthesis leads to the question of the meaning of this synthesizing operation. In actuality, the sensuous data arising in perception are not an objective whole; rather, they are living objective characters. Thus the contact of our sensitivity (*aisthesis—smyslovost*) with the world is a "contact with life" (ibid. 61). The "immediacy" of sensitive bodily contact refers to a "contact" (*dotyk*) that happens in ourselves and presupposes no distinction between the one touching and that which is touched. This consideration leads us to introduce and explain the concept of *inner*.

As Filip Karfík writes, the inner "is the metaphysical concept with which Patočka works in his manuscripts of the years 1939 and 1945" (Karfík 2008, 40). But *inner* is not just the correlate of *outer*, for by giving up the transcendental Husserlian subjectivity (consciousness with its own experiences) and assuming the Heideggerian *Dasein*, Patočka intends to replace the entire concept of "subject." The concept of transcendental subjectivity is insufficient because the intentional life of such subjectivity is never completely attainable reflexively; life has an inner that never comes to light. "This inner is the source of all intentional life […]. Since this inner belongs to every intentional act as its constitutive moment, the whole theory of intentionality must be […] formulated again on the foundation of the concept of a non-objective inner" (ibid. 39). The "inner" is therefore a term indicating not only the subject, but also spirit and life. This concept "has a non-objective/dynamic character" (Patočka 2014b, 30). It indicates what is subjective in the sense of something vital. However, an immediate self-understanding of the inner is not possible because we do not have a direct impression of it. "Understanding the living being is one of the most remote boundaries of our intimate world, and it belongs to our original possibilities of living in the living being" (ibid. 62). The inner thus replaces the term consciousness ("the inner is consciousness"—ibid. 31); its task is to make the

entire being living and sensitive. It cannot be fixed in mere concepts and cannot be found and analyzed as a mere thing.

On the one hand, we need objectivity to access reality and to organize it; on the other hand, everything falls through when we talk about living being by starting from our own body. Indeed, rationality is also inserted into the body we *are*, and our inner (or the self) forms one with our body. In living among things bodily and harmonizing with the universe, we too are things among other things and at the same level. However, the inner of life can be misunderstood from the perspective of objectivity. Perhaps for this reason Patočka distinguishes between a reifying objectification conforming to a representation that is able to understand the essence of objectification, and an indirect objectification whose "object" is not the result of an intuition. The concept of inner thus indicate the difference between a "pure objectivity" and the *interweaving* of the subjective and the objective element. What is at stake here, then, is the mutual flowing together of the subjective with the objective aspect, that is, the interweaving of a harmonious vitality within a network of meanings constituted by processes, links, and mutual references.[8] The subject of synthesis—the interweaving—is neither subjective nor non-subjective, and "the synthesis can only be understood in terms of the interweaving, the subject's harmony with the world" (Santos 2007, 20). In this original sensitive unity of subjective and objective we "recognize" ourselves.

Patočka connects the concept of the *spirit* with this vital *inner*. Spirit is the key to a critical attitude toward what is given. Indeed, its peculiarity consists of the overcoming of givenness in general. For thousands of years, European humanity has approached the inner through the concept of the spirit, and "there is no doubt that the spirit belongs to the inner" (Patočka 2014b, 30); in fact, "it is undoubtedly the most extreme interiority we can think of" (Patočka 2007, 27). Clarifying the history of this concept means tracing its infinite echo. The spirit includes the dynamism of everything that is alive. Spirit "refers to the meanings of quivering (*kypět*), of foaming, to expressions for strong wind" (Patočka 2014b, 16). It is what surpasses any merely biological understanding of life. Compared to the successes of objectification, the spirit shows us that it is not possible to tear away "what is not objectifiable from its movement of vital sense" (Santos 2007, 23). The "seeing" and "representing"

[8] "Ultimately it is sufficient to reflect on what life would be like without a blue sky, without delicate contacts, without the secret influence of noises and sounds" (ibid. 69).

involved in direct objectification cannot capture the dynamic character of this core of meaning, but transforms it into a frozen whole. According to ancient rationality, the spirit was defined instead as "the source of life" (Patočka 2014b, 16). Spirit concides with this inner life "in its specific beginning or according to its summary concept" (ibid.). The spirit "is being-*shaken*" (Patočka 2009, 158). This means that the experience of transcendence cannot be positively established, but must always remain something negative.

A final consideration concerns our use of language, which always reveals a way of thinking. According to Patočka, when speaking we should go from the outer to the inside to catch the world in its living aspect. To accomplish this turning inward, however, we should give up any fixation in the form of defining lived experience in terms of what is intuitively given. Our inner is moved toward life by a fundamental interest in itself. Thus life binds us to ourselves, and in this sense there is a radical lack of distance from ourselves. And we have no other choice. This lack of distance, however, is at the same time the condition of possibility of any distance because it makes the links with something external to us possible. But it is always an event that springs from within.

3. World-Experience and Life as Continuous Tension

The immediate contact with things happens through sensation and perception. This contact is usually called sensitivity (*smyslovost*), but what sensitivity means "is the oldest cross of philosophy" (Patočka 2014b, 59). On the one hand, it indicates the pure presence of the *object* (the presence of something that is foreign to us); on the other hand, it indicates the *presence* of the object (something subjective with which we identify ourselves in a certain way). The problems of sensitivity "are questions of contact with life, of contact between lives" (ibid. 60). In a 1967 essay entitled "The 'Natural' World and Phenomenology," Patočka writes: "In the eyes of the other […] I begin to live anew, feeling my life, and […] all that up to then had escaped me and had been present only in concealment—without that life becoming an object, detached from me and placed before me; […] without losing any of its impenetrability, its virgin depth and unreachable mystery, any of that *distance* which indicates that we are dealing with the past" (Patočka 1989, 264).

For Patočka it is important to take a position on the issue of aisthesis for two reasons: because it is necessary to clarify the synthetic character of the

conception of objectivity, and because in aisthesis, contact means contact with life, and not with something exclusively external. Thus aisthesis does not allow itself to be traced back to the subject-object schema; through it we are given not only dead qualities, but also living characteristics in which we perceive something identical to life itself. The emotional aspect of lived experiences accordingly includes something more than lived experiences: namely, the non-difference (*nerozlišenost*) of subject and object. For this reason the basic layer of aisthesis is a request for identity as harmony and beauty; aisthesis is basically sympathy, participation in a life that dominates us. All of life is founded on this sympathy, and there is no sympathy without a deep identity or resonance between the living characteristics. However, if life were to exhaust itself in harmony, then there would be no transcendence. From the point of view of its essence, life never lets itself be understood starting from identity; rather, it must be understood as "what disturbs unity" (Patočka 1994, 68). In this sense, the more harmonious life is, the less the *internal* can be found in it. A request for an identity can always be found in our impressions, but this request can never be realized because identity is only given as a possibility—disharmony and non-unity can also be discovered in life. The importance of identity is nevertheless based on the presence of another force, which is "the hidden spring of tension" as the sole source from which "the scene of conscious life opens up" (ibid. 69). Patočka moves toward a philosophy of vitality based on the non-distinction between subject and object. And the determination of this philosophy "is essentially connected with a so-called 'internal' understanding. The vitality of both human and non-human life consists in forming an [irreducible] 'inner,' in having an intimate autonomy, a life 'of its own'" (Santos 2007, 17).

In the *Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences in Outline,* Hegel too talks about life. In an addition to §237 he says that "life has being where inner and outer, […] subjectivity and objectivity etc., are one and the same" (Hegel 1970, 11). Hegel's concept of life is the unity of distinct elements. Life lies in the middle between spirit and nature, and "it is at the same time the solution of this contradiction" (ibid.). Patočka would probably agree with the first part of this statement, but he wouldn't agree with the notion that life is the solution to the contradiction. Indeed, for him life manifests itself as a self-unraveling tension. From an objective point of view, everything must be clarified and resolved, including incoherences and contradictions. The universe is an intellectual construct that can be examined, observed, analyzed, and resolved. But according to Patočka, when we refer to life it is not true that everything

complies with our forecasts. Philosophy does not aim to solve problems, but to analyze them ever more deeply and to display their manifold aspects. Philosophy must "suggest the mystery" (Patočka 2014b, 11). We cannot determine life positively: life coincides with the "opened," i. e., it can be characterized only by its difference from any determined content (Novotný 2012, 146). The Czech philosopher also uses the metaphor of the arc: in the form of transcendence, life is "a tensed arc" (Patočka 2014b, 68). The stronger the tension, the greater will be the force with which we detach from the immediate. For this reason, "non-objectified life […] is life in tension (*život v napětí*)" (ibid. 17). Since we are involved in this internal tension, we are accordingly captivated by a deep interest in it. As a result, *interest* is also an essential part of our inner life: we worry about ourselves. Interest implies being occupied with something, and it also means the impossibility of distance from ourselves. We do not live a non-problematic life. In the face of our various practical interests, we cannot free ourselves from the constraints that life imposes on us. This lack of distance from ourselves is the premise for every objective vision and it expresses the original "non-objectivity" of the inner. Thus "we can never *have* ourselves" (ibid. 20) as an objective element. The objective element is normally peaceful (*klidné*), whereas the concern of the inner interest for our life is the negation of every objective peace. Life is not merely a process, but a drama in the original sense, an event coming from a state of unrest. All the concepts with which we strive to understand the inner are only metaphors; they do not directly say what life is in itself. They only provide indications.

It clearly appears from this analysis that introspective reflection, thought as an adequate objectification of experiences, is incapable of intuiting life, because in its originality, human life is not an objective reality—and life can be objectified only when it has already been realized. In this regard, as Husserl points out in *The Crisis of the European Sciences*, the elimination of the subjective component from life leads to the transformation of all historical events into a cascade of non-senses. In this way, however, we forget that *life must be shaped* according to desires and hopes that make it rich in meaning. Patočka tries to reinterpret existence by starting from the internal sources of life itself. Objectivism, on the other hand, only unites humanity outwardly because it lacks reflection on the life from which it was born. If life were something to be seen, something present that we could make sense of from the outside, we could conceive of it as the sciences of nature do, i. e., "through the completely external observation method that establishes laws" (Patočka 2007, 202). On the contrary, life "*is without closure* in more than one sense" (ibid. 103): life

never has its own beginning in itself and it can surpass itself in its own posterity. Even in the social sphere, "the collective becoming of 'us' is always open and unfinished. In the framework of life there is an infinite multiplicity of possibilities that can be grasped" (ibid.) and that tend to be realized. However, these possibilities show that a restlessness arises in internal life (*neklid*) so the objective is never really known. Thus movement is the right concept through which to approach life because it both expresses what resists objectification and maintains a series of characteristics that link it to the primary character of life. Existence itself can be explained as movement. These hints thus anticipate the studies on the movements of existence that will emerge over twenty years later. In the 1940s, tension was thought to act like a sting that keeps life moving. This sting saves life from the danger of an indistinguishable rigid identity—true harmony is tension. At this point we better understand what the aim of the criticism of objectivity is: it allows Patočka to reformulate what the subject is and what the meaning of reflection is. Therefore even when we talk about *cogito* and reflection, we must first of all clarify how the subject lives, i. e., how subjects experience themselves and the surrounding world. Here Patočka transcends the dichotomy of subject and object as well as making a comparison with history, for in actuality there is no strict dividing line between subject and object in history (ibid. 171). The world has its own variability, and this means that historical knowledge has a greater depth than knowledge understood as a pure act. Thus history too breaks with an attitude that absolutizes objectivism.

In conclusion, I want to show that Patočka will continue to develop his reflection on these issues in a way that will lead him to the project of a phenomenology and metaphysics of *movement*. I will consider two aspects: the correlation between subject and world, and the functions of life.

(1) *The correlation between subject and world*. As we have seen, according to Patočka, the task of a philosophy formulated "on a new basis" (Patočka 2014b, 14) is to clarify the concept of subjectivity, of the subjective element, in order to distance itself from the concept of the abstract objectifying subject of idealism (and of rationalism). Subjectivity must never close in on itself, since it exists only in its interweaving with the world, that is to say, in its being-in-the-world. This interweaving of subject and world is the true subject of synthesis. The world is neither outside nor within the subject. This is why the world is called "the light of life" (ibid. 55) illuminating the path of humankind, and subjectivity is like a trace or a track that we find on this path. Human life

is therefore an opening to the world, and the world shows that the human inner is directed toward the outer. In the 1970s the philosopher will say that what the connection of the subjective element with the world means is that "without the world our understanding would be inconceivable, and the world could not be conceived of without a being that includes it" (Patočka 2007, 239). Reflecting on the concept of the world is therefore important for two reasons. On the one hand, this concept clarifies the essence of the subject; on the other hand, the world concerns humankind's need for sense. Indeed, each of our syntheses presupposes the original world that forms meaning. "Our life is pervaded by a whole of meaning that never allows itself to be completely objectified" (Patočka 2014b, 55). In 1976 the philosopher writes that humans can never get rid of practical objectivity; they "can't suppress the object, nature, the world—nothing can deprive them of the phenomenon of objectivity" (Patočka 2014a, 129), but "objectivity can lose its meaning for them" (ibid.). Thus a focus on the meaning of objectivity is important so that someone "who has absolutely adhered to reification, to the 'objectification' of life" (ibid. 130) doesn't end up falling into the experience of meaninglessness. Even if the world is not objective, it remains a whole that "determines objectivity in its sense" (Patočka 2014b, 55), thereby also determining the meaning of the activity of human knowledge. In Patočka's final reflections, the world will become the very structure of human experience itself. It shares an essential relationship with us. Those who experience the world cannot see and realize its subjective character because their gaze goes directly toward things in their immediacy; however, "the world is not only the world that is, but also the world that shows itself" (Patočka 2002, 31). The subject of every manifestation remains the world, even if the structure of the appearing world is independent of real things and is a matter of the how of its manifestation. In the 1940s, however, we do not yet see this metaphysical orientation of his later writings.

(2) *The functions of life*. The original world is accordingly the situational world in which life unfolds on different levels and takes its positions on these levels. The most frequent level is that of ordinariness: even if life carries on in it without tension, there is nevertheless a constant restlessness moving under the

surface. Every moment of life is defined as a movement.[9] In a 1968 text entitled "The Writer and His Problem: For a Philosophy of Literature," it is said that the world in which we live is not the "world for oneself," but the "world of life," whose meaning is continually elaborated and enriched by the "anonymous" functions of life. These functions are anonymous because we are constantly faced with the results without knowing who the author is. The text continues as follows:

> The object of life is not originally life itself, but the world of meaning, elaborated and spiritualized by life, the world as a continuous echo […]. In vital practice, which concerns itself primarily with the autonomy of things, such resonance does not interest us; what matters in it is to arrive at work on time, add wood to the fire when it is necessary, […] and so on. The writer-poet, on the other hand, unveils and continuously manifests the resonance of the world. Therefore he […] does not give meaning to life, but simply collects it and unveils it. [He] leaves anonymity intact as such; he does nothing but accentuate its results […]. The writer reveals the creative process of reality itself, that which does not belong to the "substance," yet incontestably exists. (Patočka 1970, 71 f.).

Thus the world is full of an unsolved mystery that we find before us at every step. And perhaps it is for this reason that in the *Heretical Essays* Patočka speaks of "the infinite depth of reality" (Patočka 1996, 75).

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[9] The doctrine of the movements of existence, however, dates back to the 1960s.

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